

Appl. No. 10/061,381
Amdt. dated July 26, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 30, 2004

Remarks

The present amendment responds to the Official Action dated April 30, 2004. The Official Action rejected claims 1, 2, 5-8, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Baitz et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,206,285 (Baitz) in view of Joseph U.S. Patent No. 5,635,906 (Joseph) and further in view of Canipe et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,281,796 (Canipe). Claims 3, 4, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Baitz in view of Joseph and Canipe, and further in view of Kane et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,154,135 (Kane). Claims 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Baitz in view of Joseph, Canipe, and further in view of Heptig et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,377,269 (Heptig). These grounds of rejection are addressed below.

Claims 1, 7, and 12 have been amended to be more clear and distinct. New dependent claims 15-17 have been added. Claims 1-17 are presently pending. Proposed amendments to independent claims 1, 7, and 12 were discussed in a telephone interview with the Examiner summarized below. In the interview, the Examiner agreed the proposed amendments defined over the relied upon art. Claims 1, 7, and 12 have been amended according to the agreed upon proposed amendment discussed in the telephone interview placing them in order for allowance. New dependent claims 15-17 have been added to more completely cover certain aspects of the present invention. Claims 2-6, 8-11, and 13-17 depend from and contain all the limitations on claims 1, 7, and 12 as presently amended, claims 2-6, 8-11, and 13-17 distinguish in the same manner as claims 1, 7, and 12. Claims 1-17 are presently pending, and stand in order for allowance.

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The Present Invention

The present invention relates to product checkout devices and more specifically to a checkout device including an integrated barcode reader, scale, and electronic article surveillance (EAS) system. Common checkout devices include combinations of barcode readers and scales. One example of such a checkout device is the NCR 7875 checkout device. Another example of a checkout device includes a barcode reader and an integrated EAS system. The present invention recognizes the desirability of producing a checkout device with an integrated barcode reader, scale, and EAS system. Providing an integrated checkout device addresses a number of problems including the problem of collusion between a customer and a store clerk where the clerk scans one item and deactivates another more expensive item. By linking reading the bar code of an item and deactivating a security label attached to the item in one cognizable step such problems are addressed.

In accordance with the teachings of the present invention, a checkout device including an integrated barcode reader, scale, and electronic article surveillance (EAS) is provided. The checkout device includes a scale assembly including a base portion and a weigh plate disposed over the base portion. The weigh plate includes an aperture. A barcode reader is located between the base portion and the weigh plate and reads a barcode of an item through the aperture in the weigh plate. A security label deactivation system is also located between the base portion and the weigh plate, and deactivates a security tag affixed to the item after the item has been scanned. In a preferred embodiment, the checkout device is coupled to a point-of-sale

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(POS) terminal that provides both power and data connections to both the barcode reader and the scale assembly.

Interview Summary

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesy of a telephone interview concerning the above case on July 22, 2004. In the telephone call, proposed amendments to claims 1, 7, and 12 were discussed. Amended claims 1, 7, and 12 as listed above are the same amendments reviewed by the Examiner and discussed during the interview. Further, Baitz and Joseph also were discussed during the interview. The Examiner agreed that the claims as presently amended define over the currently relied upon art.

The Art Rejections

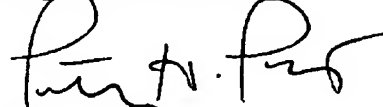
Although applicants do not acquiesce to the present rejections, in light of the agreement reached in the telephone interview, the present rejections are moot.

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Conclusion

All of the presently pending claims, as amended, appearing to define over the applied references, withdrawal of the present rejection and prompt allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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